



Department of Justice

United States Attorney Robert E. O'Neill
Middle District of Florida

Tampa

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CONTACT: STEVE COLE

PHONE: (813) 274-6136

FAX: (813) 274-6300

PLANT CITY FELON SENTENCED FOR POSSESSION OF A FIREARM AND CRACK COCAINE

Tampa, Florida - U.S. District Judge Richard A. Lazzara, today sentenced RENALDO JOVON LEWIS, age 27, of Plant City, Florida to 17 ½ years' imprisonment and 5 years' supervised release.

LEWIS was convicted by a jury on July 23, 2008 of possession of a firearm by a convicted felon and possession of crack cocaine.

According to court documents and evidence offered at trial, on November 15, 2007, LEWIS was the passenger in a car that was stopped by a Plant City Police Officer for failing to yield the right of way. Shortly after the vehicle pulled over, another officer saw LEWIS put a white t-shirt on the ground by the passenger side door and attempt to kick it under the car. Officers retrieved the t-shirt, which contained a loaded .40 caliber pistol and a small amount of crack cocaine. LEWIS is a convicted felon, having previously been convicted for numerous felony narcotics offenses in Hillsborough County.

This is another case prosecuted as a part the Department of Justice program "Project Safe Neighborhoods" - a nationwide gun violence reduction initiative with strong support from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF). United

States Attorney Robert E. O'Neill, along with Virginia O'Brien, Special Agent in Charge, ATF Tampa Field Division, is coordinating the cooperative effort here in the Middle District of Florida with federal, state and local law enforcement officials. The objective is to reduce violent crime by locating and seizing unlawfully possessed guns and then swiftly prosecuting the offenders using both federal and state gun laws.

The case was investigated by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and the Plant City Police Department. The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Amanda Riedel and Cherie Krigsman.